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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: ECPS AORC TU
SUBJECT: ITU PLENIPOTENTIARY: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SIGN THE
FINAL ACTS

¶1. This is an action message. See paragraph 3. Post is
transmitting this on behalf of the U.S. delegation to the ITU
meeting in Antalya.

¶2. Summary and Action Request: The U.S. Delegation to the 2006
Plenipotentiary Conference of the International Telecommunication
Union has achieved its objectives at this conference held in
Antalya, Turkey. The ITU, the UN specialized agency for
telecommunications, will conclude its Plenipotentiary Conference on
Friday, November 24. The United States has satisfied virtually all
of the objectives set forth in the scope paper on this conference,
which established the following:

-Re-elect the United States to the ITU Council and elect Julie
Zoller to the Radio Regulations Board;
-Maintain the current organizational structure of the ITU;
-Enhance Member State oversight of ITU activities by strengthening
the role of the ITU Council in the management of ITU resources;
-Maintain a budget ceiling reflecting zero nominal growth, promote
transparency in ITU budget processes, advocate prioritization of ITU
activities and support a balanced budget for the Union; and
-Preserve the stability and security of the Internet while promoting
private sector leadership in the technical development and
management of the Internet, in particular, in relation to the
Internet's domain name and addressing system (DNS).

¶3. Action Request: In light of these results, Ambassador David A.
Gross, head of the U.S. delegation, requests Department approval to
sign the Final Acts of this ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, with
appropriate reservations and protocol statements as necessary.
Other agencies - Department of Commerce's National
Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of
Defense, and the Federal Communications Commission, participating on
the delegation have cleared this cable and recommend authorization
to sign the Final Acts. End summary and action request.

Elections

¶4. The United States was successful in its campaign to be
re-elected to the 46-member ITU Council. The U.S. candidate for the
Radio Regulations Board, Julie Zoller, was elected by the largest
number of votes in the region. She is the first woman to be elected
to an ITU post.

¶5. Member States elected Hamadoun Toure of Mali to the post of
Secretary-General, defeating Matthias Kurth , Germany; Marc Furrer,

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Switzerland; Roberto Blois, Brazil (the current Deputy

Secretary-General); Montasser Ouaili, Tunisia; and Muna Nijem,

Jordan. Mr. Toure is well known in the ITU, having served two terms as Director of the Telecommunications Development Sector. For Deputy Secretary-General, another ITU insider, Houlin Zhao was elected to the post on the first ballot. Mr. Zhao of China is currently the Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector. Other candidates included: Dr. Ayhan Beydogan, Turkey; Maj. General John Tandoh, Ghana; and Carlos Sanchez, Spain. Mr. Valery Timofeev, Russia, the current Director of the Radiocommunication Sector, was re-elected without opposition.

¶6.   There was competition for the Director of the Telecommunications Standardization Sector. There were four candidates: Fabio Bigi, Italy; Dr.Yuji Inoue, Japan; Dr. Kishik Park, Korea; and Malcolm Johnson, UK.   Malcolm Johnson, who is well known in ITU circles as Head or Deputy Head of UK delegations, was elected by Member States on the third ballot. There were also four candidates for the Telecommunication Development Sector: Abdelkrim Boussaid, Algeria; Najat Rochdi, Morocco; Sami Al-Basheer, Saudi Arabia; and Patrick Masambu, Uganda. Again, it took two ballots to elect the new Director - Sami Al Basheer. He is General Manager, International Affairs with the Communication and Information Technology Commission of Saudi Arabia.

¶7.   After election of the ITU's senior management officials, the conference held elections for the Radio Regulations Board (RRB), a twelve-member body that meets in Geneva several times a year. The U.S. candidate, Julie Zoller, received the largest number of votes in the Amercas Region, a real tribute to her qualification and her effective campaign. Also elected frm the region was Bob Jones from Canada, the frmer Director of the ITU's Radiocommunication Sector. Candidates from Honduras and Venezuela were defeated.

¶8.   Last were the elections to the ITU Council, which consists of 46 Member States, one quarter of the ITU membership.   Member States re-elected the United States to Council with a substantial increase in its number of votes from previous years. With a few exceptions, most of the members of Council were re-elected for another term.

Notably, Iran was soundly defeated in its bid for re-election., and the UK, which lost its Council seat in 2002, was also among the unsuccessful candidates.   Iran's candidate for the RRB also lost.

Political Issues

¶9.   Cuba: Cuba initially introduced a resolution condemning U.S. broadcasts into Cuba. The Conference Chair moved the issue to a small group, including the U.S. and Cuban delegations, to develop a Chair's statement. A statement was worked out explaining that the dispute over reported harmful interference would be referred to the World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC) in 2007. That statement, coordinated with Washington, fully achieved all U.S. objectives. The Chair read that statement into the record of the Plenary on November 22, and no further action will be taken on the Cuban resolution.

¶10. Lebanon: An Arab group resolution on assistance to rebuild Lebanon's telecommunications infrastructure initially contained objectionable references to Israeli aggression. The U.S. successfully encouraged Lebanon to revise the resolution to focus exclusively on technical assistance and to remove all references to Israel. That resolution is fully acceptable to all parties including the U.S.

¶11. Palestine: The Palestine issue was resolved by permitting the Palestinian private sector to become ITU Sector Members (with somewhat fewer rights than normal) or Associate members. It is notable that the Palestinian Authority does not play a role in approving the entities for membership; that function will be done by the ITU Secretary-General. In addition, the PA will receive slightly enhanced rights at the ITU that are consistent with its rights at the UNGA. The resolution of this matter is fully supported by Israel and meets U.S. requirements.

Budget and Management

¶12. The ITU Plenipotentiary decided on a contributory unit (CU) of
318,000 Swiss francs (CHF) for the 2008-2009 budgetary period, which
represents zero nominal growth. The upper limit for the quadrennial
period 2008-2011 was set at 330,000 CHF. Any increase in the
contributory unit for 2010-11 would have to be approved by the 2009
Council. The upper limit is the same one established four years ago
in Marrakesh, which was never reached.

¶13. The U.S. introduced a resolution accepted by the
Plenipotentiary to create a new Management and Budget Group (MBG) of
the Council. The MBG will provide oversight of the implementation
of the Strategic and Operational Plans, biennial budgets, and the
decisions of Council between annual Council sessions.

¶14. The ITU joined other UN organizations in adopting a resolution
to introduce results based management. This system introduces two
new management processes: delegation of authority and accountability
intended to foster more efficient use of all resources and to
establish more agile and responsive organizations;.and contractual
arrangements (i.e. outsourcing) which is linked to levels of
compensation and cost savings.

Internet Issues

¶15. It appears that the resolution on the ITU's role regarding
Internet issues, including "Internet governance issues" are being
successfully resolved consistent with U.S. objectives. For example,
the United States was able to push out any revision of the current
International Telecommunication Regulations (ITRs) until 2012, and
then only after appropriate review and consideration. This is a
major victory for the United States, as many ITU Member States,
especially from the Middle East and Africa, wanted an immediately
revised and expanded treaty to include Internet matters. The United
States strongly opposed any revision of the ITRs, in particular any
expansion of the treaty to cover the Internet.

¶16. With respect to the WSIS, the Plenipotentiary Conference
confirmed a role for the ITU on Information Society issues related
to infrastructure development and cybersecurity, consistent with the
existing mandate of the ITU.   These tasks do not represent an
expansion of the ITU's role in Information Society matters, but
rather an affirmation of the agreements of the WSIS. The USG and
its private sector support and actively contribute to ITU activities
in these two areas and consider the Plenipotentiary Conference

results with respect to the WSIS to be constructive in facilitating
further dialogue and activities amongst the ITU Members (governments
and private sector members) on issues of global infrastructure
development and cybersecurity issues.

¶17. A new resolution on the ITU's role in implementing the WSIS
outcomes was approved. The resolution addresses the responsibilities
of the Secretary-General and the three Sectors, requiring the
Secretary-General to the coordinate ITU activities so as to avoid

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duplication of effort.

Wilson